

Found on Deck


By AS2 Thomas Bach, USS Kearsarge (LHD-3)

It was a beautiful morning off the coast of North Carolina as word was passed from the 1MC, “All hands are cordially invited to the flight deck for a FOD walkdown.” Personnel were coming from all directions.

We all lined up and commenced the FOD walkdown. As the group approached the aft end of the island structure, ball bearings were found between the island and the A/S32A-36A amphibious assault crash crane, “Tilley.” Post-walkdown analysis of the FOD recovered led to immediate tasking to identify the source of the ball bearings.

A close inspection of the crash crane by numerous support-equipment technicians revealed the source of the FOD. The doors on the engine-hood assembly of the crash crane use ball bearings to assist in opening and closing. The doors had been removed, and eight ball bearings were missing.

Further investigation produced an additional five bearings that were out of the track, as well. The door-slide track was damaged and would not hold the bearings in place. Review of current Periodic Maintenance Instructions did not reveal any requirement to open, close, lubricate or inspect the chassis doors. A recommendation was submitted to the CFA to add an MRC to include these steps at a specified interval.

This incident paints a clear picture of how important the PMS program is and how it relates to the FOD program. Foreign object debris can come from many places, including our support equipment. 

AS2 Bach works in AIMD.

